

Description

LIFTING APPARATUS

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0001] The invention relates to a lifting apparatus for lifting and lowering a load, having

[0002] a) a lifting drum;

[0003] b) a drive, by which the lifting drum can be set in rotation in both directions;

[0004] c) at least two bands, serving as pulling means, which are secured by one end to the lifting drum and at the other end carry a holding device for the load;

[0005] d) the bands being able to be wound up on the lifting drum, by rotation of the latter, in such a way that one turn lies above the other.

[0006] A wide variety of configurations of lifting apparatuses employing a lifting drum and at least one flexible pulling means which can be wound up on this drum are known. Ropes, chains or bands, in particular, are used as the pulling means. Bands have the advantage that they can be

wound up on the lifting drum in a particularly well-defined manner and have a relatively high carrying capacity, while nevertheless remaining sufficiently flexible. For this reason, lifting apparatuses which employ bands as the pulling means, with which the present invention is also concerned, are enjoying increasing popularity.

[0007] A plurality of load-carrying bands are generally employed in cases where the carrying capacity of the lifting apparatus is to be increased or loads with large dimensions are to be lifted and lowered. In such lifting apparatuses known from the market, the different bands were wound up on the lifting drum one beside the other, i.e. in different axial regions. However, this gives rise to geometrical problems with the band guidance, in particular where there are a large number of bands or the space is confined.

[0008] The object of the present invention is to configure a lifting apparatus of the type mentioned at the outset in such a way that, while maintaining precise guidance of the bands, a large number of bands, suited to the requirements, can be employed without much space being required for their guidance.

[0009] This object is achieved according to the invention in that

[0010] e) at least two bands can be wound up on the lifting drum with accurate tracking and so as to lie one above the other.

[0011] According to the invention, the plurality of bands are thus no longer wound up one beside the other in axially different regions, but one above the other in the same axial region of the lifting drum. It is now no longer turns of one and the same band that lie directly one above the other, but turns of different bands. The winding-up behaviour of these bands lying one above the other can be controlled very well. Moreover, they can be guided in a relatively confined space. Each of the bands lying one above the other can be dimensioned in such a way that, in an emergency when another band breaks, it can take over the share of the load which has hitherto been carried by this other band and in this way emergency operation of the lifting apparatus is possible. This contributes to increased operating safety of the lifting apparatus.

[0012] Winding a plurality of bands on the lifting drum one above the other in the manner according to the invention gives rise to the problem that, on unwinding the bands from the lifting drum, at a certain angular rotation different lengths of the bands are unwound. This results from the fact that

the turns of the bands, which are unwound simultaneously, lie on different radii. A configuration of the invention is therefore recommended in which the lower ends of the bands are connected to a holding device for the load, which is configured as a compensating device for the varying lengths, on winding up and unwinding, of the unwound parts of the bands lying one above the other on the lifting drum. This compensating device makes it possible for the lower ends of the bands lying one above the other to move at slightly different speeds on unwinding or winding up, without losing the uniform load distribution to the different bands.

[0013] By way of example, it is possible for two bands to be able to be wound up on the lifting drum with accurate tracking and so as to lie one above the other. In this case, the holding device can comprise a rocker element which connects the lower ends of the two bands to one another, the rocker element having, between the points at which the force is introduced by the bands, a fastening device for the load. The different vertical movements of the lower ends of the bands lying one above the other is offset by a pivoting of the rocker element.

[0014] In this case, the lower ends of the bands are expediently

secured in clamping pieces articulated in opposite regions of the rocker element.

[0015] If three bands are to be able to be wound up on the lifting drum with accurate tracking and so as to lie one above the other, the following construction is possible: the lower ends of the two outer bands are connected to one another, the holding device comprising a deflection roller which is carried by the middle band and around which the connection between the two outer bands is guided. The vertical position of the holding device is in this case determined substantially by the middle band, while the vertical positions of the lower ends of the two outer bands are displaced, on unwinding and winding up, in opposite directions relative to the lower end of the middle band. As a result of the non-positive connection between the lower ends of the outer bands, the same stress is always present in these bands. The length of the middle band must be dimensioned in such a way that this band too carries substantially the same share of the load. This design presupposes, however, that at least the two outer bands have the same thickness.

[0016] The lower ends of the two outer bands can, in principle, be connected to one another in one piece, with the result

that the two outer bands are formed by a single band laid around the deflection roller. A more favourable construction, however, is that in which the lower ends of the two outer bands are connected to one another by a piece of rope or chain which is guided around the deflection roller. It is thereby possible to use smaller-diameter and thus space-saving deflection rollers.

[0017] It is also possible for four bands to be able to be wound up on the lifting drum with accurate tracking and so as to lie one above the other. In this case, a design can be employed in which the lower ends of the first pair of adjacent bands and the lower ends of the second pair of adjacent bands are connected to one another, the holding device comprising:

[0018] a) a rocker element;

[0019] b) a first deflection roller, around which the connection of the lower ends of the first pair of bands is guided and which is mounted in an end region of the rocker element;

[0020] c) a second deflection roller, around which the connection of the lower ends of the second pair of bands is guided and which is mounted in the opposite end region of the rocker element; and

[0021] d) the rocker element, at a point lying between the points

at which the deflection rollers are mounted, having a fastening device for the load.

[0022] In this design, the two deflection rollers perform a vertical movement which corresponds to an average of the vertical movement of the two bands with which these deflection rollers are associated. Through the rocker element, in turn, a further averaging of the vertical positions of the two deflection rollers takes place.

[0023] In this latter design too, it is recommended for the reasons already mentioned above that the connections of the lower ends of the two pairs of bands are pieces of rope or chain.

[0024] The winding-up and unwinding of the bands lying one above the other involves a sliding movement of these bands relative to one another. It is therefore favourable if the bands are provided with a friction-reducing coating on at least one side, which coating may be a graphite or Teflon coating or the like.

[0025] As a result of the fact that the ends of the bands lying one above the other are fastened to the circumferential surface of the lifting drum, a step is formed which has to be overcome by the radially inner band after the first turn. In order to avoid bending of the band at this point, it is ad-

vantageous if at least one spacer element, on which the first turn of the radially innermost band can come to bear before reaching the step formed by the ends of the bands, is provided on the circumferential surface of the lifting drum.

[0026] Preferably, the bands consist of metal, in particular of steel.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0027] Exemplary embodiments of the invention are explained in more detail below with reference to the drawing, in which:

[0028] Figure 1 shows a section through the lifting drum and two load-carrying bands of a lifting apparatus;

[0029] Figure 2 shows a detail enlargement from Figure 1;

[0030] Figure 3 shows, in section, a holding device used in lifting apparatuses employing three bands; and

[0031] Figure 4 shows, in section, a holding device used in lifting apparatuses employing four bands.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0032] Reference is made first of all to Figure 1, which can be understood as a highly schematic illustration of a simple lifting apparatus. The lifting apparatus, identified as a whole by the reference symbol 1, comprises as the main

component a lifting drum 2 which is rotatably fitted in two bearing blocks 4 (only one indicated in the drawing) fixed on a mounting plate 3. The lifting drum 2 can be rotated in both directions of rotation by a drive motor (not illustrated) which is likewise mounted on the mounting plate 3.

[0033] The mounting plate 3 is placed at a certain height above the room floor, for example by means of a steel structure (not illustrated).

[0034] To lift and lower the load, two steel bands 5a, 5b are used as the pulling means, which bands can be wound up on the lifting drum 2 with accurate tracking and so as to lie one above the other in a plurality of turns likewise lying one above the other, as can be seen from Figures 1 and 2. This means that following one another radially from the inside outwards on the lateral surface of the lifting drum 2 are first of all a turn of the steel band 5a on the left in Figure 1, then a turn of the steel band 5b on the right in Figure 1 and then, in accordance with the position of the load to be lifted or lowered, further turns alternately of the steel band 5a and of the steel band 5b.

[0035] As can be seen in particular from Figure 2, the ends 6a, 6b of the two steel bands 5a, 5b are suitably secured to

the lateral surface of the lifting drum 2, for example by adhesive bonding, clamping, welding or else simply by the friction produced by turns of the two steel bands 5a, 5b lying thereabove. In the latter case, the steel bands 5a, 5b must of course not be unwound from the lifting drum 2 down to the last turn in normal operation.

[0036] The ends 6a, 6b of the two steel bands 5a, 5b form a step for the first turn of the steel band 5a on the left in Figure 1, which step has to be overcome by the steel band 5a and the height of which is equal to the sum of the thicknesses of the two steel bands 5a and 5b. This results in an empty space 7 between the first turn of the steel band 5a and the lateral surface of the lifting drum 2. In order to prevent the first turn of the steel band 5a and hence, to a certain extent, also the further turns, lying thereabove, of both steel bands 5a, 5b from being pressed into the clearance 7 and thereby bent at the step formed by the ends 6a, 6b, a total of three spacer elements 8a, 8b and 8c in the form of metal sheets 8a, 8b and 8c curved in the shape of circular arcs are arranged in this empty space 7. Each of these metal sheets 8a, 8b and 8c has a constant thickness. The thickness of the metal sheets 8a, 8b, 8c increases, however, in the clockwise direction towards the

step formed by the ends 6a, 6b. Generally, the direction in which the thickness of the spacer elements 8a, 8b, 8c is to increase, is opposite that direction in which the lifting drum 2 rotates on lifting the load.

[0037] The spacer elements 8a, 8b, 8c thereby form bearing surfaces for the first turn of the steel band 5a, preventing this turn from "caving in" too deeply, radially inwards. It is thus not absolutely necessary for the thickness of the spacer elements 8a, 8b, 8c to increase continuously in the stated direction, so as to exactly fill up the empty space 7 formed geometrically. Nor do the spacer elements 8a, 8b, 8c have to butt against one another. They can, seen in the circumferential direction, also be at a distance, which is bridged by the steel band 5a. The number of spacer elements 8a, 8b, 8c used can vary depending on the circumstances. The result, however, is that the first turn of the steel band 5a and hence also the turns, lying thereabove, of both steel bands 5a, 5b undergo no bending or only insignificant bending at the step formed by the ends 6a, 6b, so that no appreciable alternating loading of the steel bands 5a, 5b occurs at this point.

[0038] Clamped to the lower ends of each of the steel bands 5a, 5b is a clamping piece 9a, 9b. The lower regions of the

two clamping pieces 9a, 9b are each articulated with the aid of a bearing pin 10a, 10b at opposite end regions of a rocker element 11. The rocker element 11 has in the central region a bore 12, to which the load (not illustrated) can be attached. The rocker element 11 thereby forms with the clamping pieces 9a, 9b a holding device 50 for the load.

[0039] The operation of the lifting apparatus 1 described is as follows:

[0040] On lowering a load attached to the rocker element 11, the lifting drum 2 is rotated in the clockwise direction in Figures 1 and 2, whereby the two steel bands 5a, 5b unwind from the lifting drum 2. Since the steel band 5b has been wound up on the lifting drum 2 on a larger radius than the steel band 5a, at a certain angular rotation of the lifting drum 2 a longer piece of the steel band 5b is unwound therefrom than of the steel band 5a. This difference in length of the two steel bands 5a, 5b is compensated for by a corresponding tilting of the rocker element 11 about the axis defined by the bore 12. The stresses within the steel bands 5a, 5b remain substantially equal in this case, so that the load is uniformly distributed to the two steel bands 5a, 5b.

[0041] In order to reduce the mutual friction as they are wound up on and unwound from the lifting drum 2, the two steel bands 5a, 5b are provided with a low-friction coating or intermediate layer, at least on a side which can come to bear on an adjacent steel band 5a, 5b on winding up. This may be a graphite coating or a Teflon band or the like.

[0042] In the exemplary embodiment described above with reference to Figures 1 and 2, two steel bands 5a, 5b have been used to carry the load. If even greater loads are to be lifted and lowered, it may be necessary to increase the number of steel bands to be wound one above the other. Since it is obvious how the relationships on the lifting drum 2 would appear in such a case, a separate illustration of this has been dispensed with. What is interesting in these cases is how the respective lower ends of the steel bands are connected to one another.

[0043] An exemplary embodiment of a holding device 150 which can be employed with three steel bands 105a, 105b and 105c is illustrated in Figure 3. The lower ends of these steel bands 105a, 105b, 105c are again clamped in clamping pieces 109a, 109b, 109c. In addition, the two ends of a piece of rope 120, guided over a deflection roller 121, are secured in the two outer clamping pieces

109a, 109c in the manner illustrated in Figure 3. The deflection roller 121 is rotatably mounted in the lower end region of the middle clamping piece 109b by means of a bearing journal 122. The load (not illustrated) is attached to the middle clamping piece 109b or to the bearing journal 122.

[0044] On lifting and lowering the load, its position is determined by the position of the clamping piece 109b clamped to the lower end of the middle steel band 105b. The differences in length which result on unwinding the two lateral steel bands 105a, 105c are compensated for by the clamping pieces 109a, 109c attached to their lower ends moving in opposite directions upwards and downwards, the stress present in them being transmitted via the rope 120. A uniform distribution of the load to all three steel bands 105a, 105b, 105c can thereby be achieved. However, this presupposes that at least the two outer steel bands 105a, 105c have the same thickness.

[0045] Finally, Figure 4 shows how the lower ends of four load-carrying steel bands 205a, 205b, 205c and 205d can be connected to one another by a holding device 250, in order to be able to compensate for the different movements of the lower ends of the steel bands 205a to 205d while

uniformly distributing the load. The holding device 250 illustrated in Figure 4 constitutes in a way a combination of the designs described above with reference to Figures 1 and 3: The lower ends of the steel bands 205a to 205d are each again clamped in a clamping piece 209a, 209b, 209c and 209d. Once again, the opposite ends of a piece of rope 220a, guided over a first deflection roller 221a, are secured in the adjacent clamping pieces 209a, 209b associated with the steel bands 205a, 205b. In a corresponding manner, the opposite ends of a second piece of rope 220b, guided over a second deflection roller 221b, are clamped to the adjacent clamping pieces 209c, 209d associated with the steel bands 205c, 205d. The two deflection rollers 221a, 221b are each rotatably mounted with the aid of a bearing journal 222a, 222b in the opposite ends of a rocker element 211.

[0046] In the middle between the two journals 222a, 222b, the rocker element 211 once again has a bore 212, to which the load (not illustrated) can be attached and which forms the axis of rotation for the tilting of the rocker element 211.

[0047] The difference in length which arises on unwinding or winding up the adjacent steel bands 205a, 205b can be

compensated for with the aid of the deflection roller 221a. Correspondingly, the difference in length which results between the steel bands 205c, 205d can be compensated for by the deflection roller 221b, while each time ensuring the same stress in the steel bands 205a, 205b and 205c, 205d connected via the pieces of rope 220a, 220b, respectively. Differences between the average changes in length of the band pair 205a, 205b, on the one hand, and the band pair 205c, 205d, on the other hand, are compensated for by tilting the rocker element 211 about the axis defined by the bore 212.